

historic feat, a reminder that the tools for success are within reach.

Darren also swims to benefit and raise awareness for the Forever Fund, an organization he cofounded, to help families pay for the costs of treatment in the infant cardi thoracic unit at UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh. He has raised more than \$65,000 to date.

Darren named the Forever Fund in remembrance of his grandmother. "She taught me that success has nothing to do with your pocketbook, but by how you treat someone who can do you absolutely no good," he recently said. Darren's personal motto is "Every breath a gift," meant to inspire today's youth to overcome personal challenges and persevere in accomplishing one's personal goals.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to honor Darren Miller's outstanding athletic achievements and service to our community and his fellow man.

RECOGNIZING RAFAEL PINEDA

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2013

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure and admiration that I stand before you today to honor Mr. Rafael Pineda, who will retire as the lead news anchor for Univision 41 on December 20th. For 42 years Mr. Pineda has been a key voice in providing the Latino community in the New York area with unparalleled news coverage.

Since his 1972 undertaking as the lead news anchor at WXTV Univision 41, Mr. Pineda has consistently demonstrated a zest for journalism that is balanced, and offers fair, universal access to all audiences. In 1988 he became host of, "Punto y Aparte," the first Spanish language first local interview program in the tri-state area. Over the last several years he has consistently guided Noticias 41 to first place in New York's Spanish language newscasts.

Rafael Pineda has served as an ongoing inspiration for all Latinos by building one of the most distinguished careers in television. Mr. Pineda was the first local news anchor to interview major political figures like President Clinton, and influential celebrities like the late Desi Arnaz. In the year 2000, he was the first Latino to be honored in the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences Silver Circle, and over the years he has won several awards, including an Emmy. Most recently, Mr. Pineda was inducted into The New York Broadcasters Association Hall of Fame.

Mr. Pineda has developed a career that has paralleled my own in regard to public service, and as a colleague, I have been consistently inspired by both his integrity and his unwavering sense of dedication to his audience and to the news. Over the years, I have appeared on his program many times, both in interviews with Mr. Pineda and in news stories concerning legislative issues. I always found that Mr. Pineda was tough but fair in the questions he asked and the issues considered. Regardless of the subject, or his own personal views, he always had the best interests of his audience in mind. After 42 years of service Mr. Pineda has grown to embody all of the best characteristics of the New York area, and I am

proud to call him a colleague and a friend. He is an invaluable member of the community whose dedication to the people can be seen in all his work throughout the years, and whose on-air presence will certainly be missed.

Mr. Speaker, I respectfully ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in honoring Rafael Pineda as an Emmy award winner, as New York's longest-serving news anchor in history, and most importantly, as an outstanding example of how one person's lifelong work can leave such a permanent mark in the hearts and minds of many.

HONORING THE NAPA VALLEY EDUCATION FOUNDATION

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2013

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Napa Valley Education Foundation as they celebrate their 30th anniversary on December 7th, 2013, at their Annual Taste for Knowledge and Gala Fundraising Event. The Napa Valley Education Foundation (NVEF) deserves recognition for their tireless efforts over the past thirty years to improve the quality of education for all children within the Napa Valley Unified School District (NVUSD).

Since its creation in 1983, the NVEF has demonstrated an admirable commitment to achieving its self-proclaimed vision to create "great public schools that inspire all children to achieve their potential and become vital members of our community." In pursuit of realizing this vision, the NVEF has made significant improvements in the quality of education possible for all students in the NVUSD.

Such improvements include the Teacher Grants Program, now known as the Spencer and Colton Grants, which was founded by the NVEF in 1983 and has raised a total of more than \$1.5 million to fund the implementation of improved teaching strategies. Additionally, the NVEF has created The Music Connection, which brings music education and exposure to over 3,000 students, as well as the Campaign to Sustain Music, which has raised \$85,000 annually over the past three years to sustain the NVUSD's music education programs. The NVEF has also created Tech Connection, a program to assist families in purchasing laptops for their children. Finally, the NVEF coordinates the Teacher of the Year Awards, which recognize and honor exceptional teachers within the NVUSD each year.

Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate at this time that we honor and thank the Napa Valley Education Foundation for their thirty years of unwavering commitment to improving the quality of education for every student within the Napa Valley Unified School District.

HONORING COOLEY MORTUARY, INC

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2013

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor as extraordinary Fu-

neral Home Business in the Mississippi Delta, Cooley's Mortuary of Batesville, MS.

Cooley's Mortuary, Inc. opened its doors in April 1990, beginning a tradition of professionalism, dedication and compassionate care to families in Batesville, Panola County, Mississippi and the surrounding communities. After serving in the United States Army for two years, and in pursuit of a need to do something "useful" with his life, Jerry Cooley enrolled into the Commonwealth College of Mortuary Science, Houston, Texas where he soon graduated and received his National Board Certified license in 1978. He began a career as funeral director and mortician at Brown Mortuary, Inc. in Laurel, Mississippi. With encouragement from his dear mother and a great ambition calling him higher, Jerry Cooley moved to Batesville, Mississippi in August 1984 where he worked as funeral manager and embalmer at Century Funeral Home.

In April of 1990, a longtime dream of Jerry Cooley's became a reality when he and his wife, Norma Jean, held an open house for a "first-generation" funeral home located at 327 Panola Avenue, Batesville, Mississippi. Cooley's Mortuary, Inc. made history in that year by accomplishing what not many other first-generation funeral homes had ever done; they received an astounding 50 calls by year's end and their first few months in business. Building on the strong foundation of compassion and service, and providing quality care to the families of Panola county, and surrounding communities, the business grew over the next several years.

Throughout the years, Cooley's Mortuary, Inc. has employed a number of additional staff, all of whom have been committed to excellence and stellar service for their customers. They have worked closely for many years as a cohesive unit serving the needs of the community with dignity, care and compassion. The business thrived and continued to set a standard for funeral service in the Panola County area.

They say "beside every successful man stands a woman" and without question this is certainly the case with Cooley's Mortuary. The business would not have existed without Norma Jean Cooley. Her strong support and countless hours of work should not go unmentioned. She has served as Vice President and serves the business faithfully enabling it to respond to and serve families in their time of need.

November 29, 2007 marked a new era and a lifelong dream fulfilled for Jerry and Norma Cooley with the groundbreaking of a new modern facility. The "second generation" Cooley's Mortuary, Inc. was built and dedicated in August 2009, making it a premier funeral home in Batesville, Mississippi. The 11,700 square foot facility is constructed on a two acre lot and includes four offices, a library, prayer room, two family viewing rooms, and a chapel with a seating capacity for 250 people. In Cooley's own words, "I wanted to have the very best for the people we serve."

Cooley's Mortuary is a family owned community-located funeral home which has earned a reputation for service, affordability and reliability over the years. Word-of-mouth, without question, is its finest endorsement. Regardless of whether or not a family comes to Cooley's Mortuary for the first time, or considers it to be their "family" funeral home, Cooley's Mortuary